
Mr. K N A G G S's

S E R M O N

Before the

Lord M A Y O R,

November the Fifth, 1702

*Cur' Special' tent' apud Ecclesiam Cathe-
dral' Sancti Pauli die Fovis, v^o die
Novembris, 1702. Annoq; Reg'
Reginæ Annæ, Angl' &c. Primo.*

THIS Court doth desire Mr. *Knaggs*
to Print his Sermon, this Day
Preached at the Cathedral Church
of *St. Paul, London*, before the Lord
Mayor, Aldermen, and Citizens of this
City.



A S H H U R S T.

Divine Providence. 8

A
SERMON

Before the Right HONOURABLE
THE
LORD MAYOR,

AND
The Right WORSHIPFUL the
ALDERMEN and SHERIFFS
OF THE

City of **LONDON;**

Preach'd on *November* 5th. 1702,
at *St. Paul's Church*.

By **THO. KNAGGS**, M.A. and Chaplain to
to the Right Honourable **FULK**, Lord Brook.

LONDON, Printed for *Cha. Harper*, at the *Flower-de-Luce*
over-against *St. Dunstan's Church* in *Fleetstreet*. 1702.



To the Right H O N O U R A B L E,
S^R. S A M U E L D A S H W O O D,
L O R D M A Y O R
O F
L O N D O N.

My L O R D,

Y O U R Eminent Loyalty to the
Q U E E N, Your Ardent Zeal
to the Church of England, and
Your Profound Knowledge in Govern-
ment, have got You so great a Name, that
Your Lordship came to the Chair with that
Publick Approbation, that few, or none of Your
Predecessors ever did. These, without Your other
Vertues, render You acceptable in the Eyes of
the whole City, to which Your Lordship
is a Glorious Ornament. I will not mention
how Honourably You have acquitted Your-
self

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DEDICATION.

Self in former Employes, but acknowledge to the World, the Honour You did me, in thinking me worthy to preach so Publick a Sermon, in so Publick a Place, which in Your Judgment, was worth the Press.

In Obedience to Your Lordship's Commands, I have given it a Publication, and
am

Your Lordship's,

Most Humble and

Obedient Servant,

THO. KNAGGS.

Divine Providence.

A S E R M O N

Preach'd On

Prov. CHAP. xxiii. Ver. 17, 18.

*Let not thine heart envy Sinners, but be thou
in the fear of the Lord all the day long;
for surely there is an end, and thine ex-
pectation shall not be cut off.*

AS the flourishing Condition of the wicked
in this World, has been ever since its be-
ginning, a constant passionate Complaint
by many good and vertuous Persons, to
the great Distrust of a Divine Providence here below;
so also the afflicted State of the truly Pious and God-
ly, has prov'd a great Temptation to them, and caus'd
them to entertain so many unquiet Apprehensions of the
Almighty,

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Almighty, as to be ready to conclude, that surely in this, *The Judge of all the Earth does not right.*

This Temptation has besieg'd the Lives, not only of *Heathens*, but many of God's dearest *Saints* and *Servants*; Job 21. 7. *Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power. They spend their Days in Wealth, live to a great Age in all manner of Pleasure, and then in a moment, go down to the Grave, without lying long languishing on a Bed of Pain or Sickness; and yet, these are the Men who say unto God, ver. 14, 15. Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve Him? and what profit shall we have, if we pray unto him? Jer. 12. 1. Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee, yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments. Wherefore does the way of the wicked prosper? Wherefore are they happy that deal very treacherously? Hab. 1. 13. Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity, wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he.*

This seeming irregularity of the Divine Providence, as *Asaph* tells us, *Psal 37.* did extreamly afflict his Spirit, and at first, appear'd so hard, that it grievously perplex'd Him. He began to doubt and stagger in his Faith, was in danger of tumbling headlong into an Unbelief of a Divine Providence, his Feet were almost gone, his Steps had well-nigh slipt, when he
saw

saw the Prosperity of the wicked, and even charg'd the ways of God with unprofitableness: ver. 13. *Verily, I have cleans'd my Heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency.* But considering the Matter more deeply, and studying to understand this Point more seriously, ver. 17. *He went into the Sanctuary of God, retired himself into the Holy Places to consult with Divine Oracles,* and thence saw his Error, and receiv'd Satisfaction and Ease.

When *Ahab* was slain, the People made no great Lamentation at his Death, but when a Religious *Josiah* falls, being cut off by a prosperous Heathen, King *Pharaoh*, then they are apt to cry out in a bad Sense, God is no Respector of Persons; that he that offers the Sacrifice of Righteousness, offers but a Fool's Sacrifice; since all the good Actions, and the most exemplary Deeds of Holiness cannot defend the righteous Man, and secure him from Danger and Trouble.

The words of the Text seem to be chiefly design'd by *Solomon*, for a remedy to his Son in this Temptation, being a persuasive to Contentment and Satisfaction with Divine Providence, which permits wicked Men to flourish for a while, inforc'd with this Reason, that there is a Reward laid up for all such as are confident in God, trust in Him, and meekly submit to His Will in that particular Case of prosperous Wick- edness, and oppressed Piety. *Let not thine heart envy sinners, but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long,*

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for

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for surely there is an end, and thine expectation shall not be cut off.

In discoursing of which Words, I shall limit my self to these following Considerations.

I. Let the times be never so Perilous and Dangerous, yet God's Providence ought not to be question'd by us, whatever its unequal Distributions be.

II. I will shew how ye are to demean yourselves under the actual Oppression of prosperous Wickedness.

III. That ye ought not to go out of the Road of your Duty, do as the wicked do, joyn with them to commit Wickedness and to do Evil, because ye see them prosper.

IV. That the flourishing Condition of the wicked is many times short liv'd, and therefore not to be envied.

Lastly, Shew there is an assured Reward, if ye have Patience a while, and meekly submit to the Will of God in His providential Administrations.

I. Let the times be never so Perilous and Dangerous, yet God's Providence ought not to be question'd by you, whatever its unequal Distributions be.

Almighty God, as he is the absolute Sovereign of all the World, so also all things in it are under the Government and Management of his Wisdom, Power and Providence, even those that seem most black, confus'd,

fus'd, and irregular. What a madness is it then for so foolish and vain a Creature as Man, to contest with the Omnipotent Hand of Heaven, to charge his Providence with Error and Injustice, and to Swell and Storm against his Divine Dispensations? Let God alone to Order and Govern the World as he thinks fit, for as his Power is infinite and cannot be resisted, so his Wisdom is infinite also, and knows what's best to be done, and when, and how. All the Dispensations of his Government are directed to most Wise and Excellent Ends. God, for Ends best known to Himself, raiseth one Man from the Dunghil, and causeth him to sit among Princes, and casteth others down into the Dust, who were once raised to the Highest Dignities and Honors. And therefore the *Heathens* who understood not God's Wise Providence that governs all things, represented Fortune blind, mounting sometimes on a Wheel, and in an instant, tumbling down again. It was good Advice *Gamaliel* gave, if a Counsel, or a Work be of God, it cannot be overthrown, and to oppose it, is to fight against God, Acts 5. 39. The Advice took, and the Men of *Israel* agreed to it. ver. 40. *There is no Counsel against the Lord, that shall stand.* Shall so finite a Creature as Man be so bold to Instruct an infinite God to govern the World? Shall he tell the Judge of all the Earth, that He is not Just, unless He punisheth the Wicked, and rewards the Vertuous when he expects it? Far be it from any of you so to do. He is a Glorious

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God,

God, cloathed with Majesty and Honour, and judgeth the Higheſt Beings, and therefore knows, ſurely, how to govern things below. Almighty God, doth nothing at random, or at a venture. The Stroaks we receive are directed and managed by the Wiſe Conduct and Guidance of an infinite Wiſdom. And therefore to Censure his Diſpenſations, to Struggle impatiently with them, or to Ruffle and Diſcompose yourſelves with unquiet Apprehenſions in their unequal Diſtributions, is to queſtion the Divine Wiſdom, and enter into a Conteſt with Him that will not, cannot, and may not be control'd. His Will is the moſt Sovereign Will: 'Tis the Will of the moſt Absolute Monarch of Heaven and Earth, founded upon, and directed by a moſt infinite Knowledge: A Will which muſt be done whether we will or no. And ſince we cannot judge our will wiſer than His, ſince we can by no means reſiſt it, it becomes us in all our Sufferings, to reſign our ſelves to the good Pleaſure of the Supream Being of Heaven and Earth. Let God manage the World as He thinks fit. Who may ſay unto Him, What doſt thou? *Epicurus* and his Followers utterly deny'd there was any ſuch thing as Divine Providence to take care of things below; for, whereas Juſtice requires it ſhould go well with the Good, and ill with the Bad; God ſometimes by his providential Diſpenſations, if not Orders, at leaſt, ſuffers it to be quite otherwiſe. And the Heathen in *Minucius Felix*, thus reaſoneth: If the World was governed

governed by Divine Providence, *Phaleris* and *Dionysius*, two cruel Tyrants, would never have been advanced to a Kingdom. *Rutilius* and *Camillus*, two Noble Romans, would not have been banish'd, nor *Socrates* poyson'd. If God's Providence be concern'd in all things, If he governs all the Issues and Events of things, *Vertue*, as the *Heathen* thought, would never go unrewarded, nor Righteousness lie in contempt.

To this I give these following Answers:

1. There is no Man but who has grievously sinned against the Lord. Even the best of Men have Sins and Failings enough to justify the Justice of Almighty God in Correcting them, so that they have no Cause to question his Justice, but rather to lay their Hands upon their Mouths, and adore the Wisdom and Goodness of God for not suffering it to be worse with them than it is. Patiently therefore bear the Indignation of the Lord, because ye have sinned against Him.

2. Gods Providence ought not to be question'd, because Affliction many times, is no Argument of God's Hatred but rather a proof of his tender Love and kindness. Heb. 12. 6. *For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every Son whom He receiveth.* Gods Providence is to be seen in Afflictions as soon as in any other thing. God does often wound that He may heal. He pulls down that He may build up. Psal. 119. 67. 71. *It was good for me that I have been afflicted, for then I learn'd thy Statutes. Before that I was afflicted*

afflicted I went astray, but now I keep thy Word. Afflictions sanctify'd by God turn to the good of his people, they encrease their Graces here, and promote their Glory hereafter.

3. Gods Providence ought not to be question'd, notwithstanding it often goes ill with the good Man and well with the Wicked, because the Prosperity of the Wicked many ways turn to their hurt and disadvantage. When Men swim in a full Tyde of Prosperity, and have the Ball of Abundance at their Foot, many Corruptions, as Pride, Vain-Glory, Luxury, and Forgetfulness of God and themselves steal upon them. A full Swing of Prosperity oft occasions much Wickedness, and an abundance of this World is many times an introducer of Atheism and Irreligion. The Prosperity of wicked Men oft destroys them.

4. Gods Providence ought not to be question'd, in that Vertue many times goes unrewarded, and Wickedness prospers, because tho' things oftentimes move irregularly here, yet the Day of judgment will set all things right, and let us see the difference between Him that served God, and Him that serv'd Him not. How comes it to pass, saith *Plato*, that we see Wickedness successful, and Vertue lie in contempt? Why do many profligate Livers pass their Days in Worldly Happiness; and die in great Rest and Triumph whereas many good Men live and die in great Afflictions, and under grievous Calamities? That *Divine* Philosopher answers Himself thus. " God doth
" not

“ not punish and chastise all wicked Men in this
“ World, to the End they may know there is a
“ Judgment to come, wherein the Ungodliness of
“ such Men shall be Corrected, neither doth He re-
“ compence all good Men with Blessings in this Life,
“ to the End they may hope there is a Place a-
“ bove where the Good and Vertuous shall be Re-
“ warded.

It is a great mistake to make an Estimate either of Happiness or Misery from things going well or ill in this World. *Many are the troubles of the Righteous*, and those whom God loves best have sometimes the Rod upon their Backs.

Thus having dispatch'd the First particular, and shewn that God's Providence ought not to question'd, whatever its unequal Distributions be. I come,

II: To shew how ye are to Demean yourselves under the Actual Oppressions of prosperous Wick- edness.

The best and wisest Course any Man can take under Afflictive Circumstances, is to hold Himself to God, to trust in Him, and order Himself according to his Will. This kind of Counsel is every where scatter'd throughout the whole Book of *Psalms*. A Book fit to be daily Perus'd by you, especially in Perillous and Dangerous times. In Prosperity the Book of *Psalms* exhorts you to Humility and Lowliness of Mind. In Adversity they afford sufficient Comfort

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Comfort and Support. If you begin to sink under the heavy Load of your manifold Sins and Transgressions, and to despair of Pardon and Forgiveness, there is in the Book of *Psalms*, variety of Expressions of God's great and infinite Mercy, which will strengthen your weak Faith, and Encourage your dying hopes. If you are troubled in Mind, afflicted or visited with Pains or Sickneses, persecuted with Enemies, or wounded in your Reputation by a Malicious or Venemous Tongue, the Book of *Psalms* will teach you how to demean yourselves. Put your trust in the Lord, commit your way unto him, and he shall bring it to pass. God is never wanting to those that trust in him, who meekly submit to his *Will*, and faithfully adhere to his *Word*. All things shall work together for your good. God Almighty will take care of you, if ye will but commit yourselves to him. Whatever your Fears or Troubles be, whether they be *Temporal* or *Spiritual*, live in obedience to God, do that which he commands, and avoid that which he forbids, and this will certainly draw after it the Protection of Heaven, and God's Blessing. Serve God, and please him by an Holy, Vertuous, and Religious Life, and he will give you your Hearts desire. Hold ye still in the Lord, and abide patiently upon him, and grieve not yourselves at him whose way doth prosper, and in the End you'll have no reason to murmur or complain, be troubled or discontented. Which brings me,

III. To let you see that ye ought not to go out of the Road of your Duty, do as the wicked do, to join with them to commit Wickedness, and be tempted to do Evil, because we see them prosper.

The *Papists* have Massacred many Thousands of poor *Protestants*: They call us *Hereticks*, and have enter'd into many bloody Designs against us. Fire and Faggot have been thought too good for us, and God by his providential Dispensations, has sometimes suffer'd them to prosper in those ways of Wickedness and Irreligion. But God forbid any here present should take up the same Principles, and mix yourselves with such who profess Massacring, and justify the Killing of Men upon the account of Difference in Religion. Sure I am, 'tis no *Christian* Spirit, no *Evangelical* Temper, to call for Fire from Heaven to consume those that dissent from us in Matters of Religion. This is no more to be expected than that all Mens Faces and Complexions, all Mens Tempers and Constitutions of Body should be alike. So long as Men have different Educations, different Trades and Professions, and different Interests to serve, besides, the Engagements of Relation and Friendship, so long there will be Disputes in several things pertaining to Religion. If we cannot convince them with Meekness, bring them over to our side, and make them of our Opinion by strong Arguments, and an exemplary

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plary Life and Conversation, let us pity their Mistake, and pray for their Conversion; but to be transported with Passion against them, or to persecute them by ill Courses and wicked, execrable Practices, is to have a *Zeal*, but not according to *Knowledge*, and with the *Papists*, to Justifie and Sanctifie the worst of Designs, under the name of *Holy Church* and *Religion*. The Wrath of Man doth not work the Righteousness of God. *Ye know not what Spirit ye are of*, said Christ to his Disciples, when they would have had him call'd for Fire from Heaven to destroy the *Samaritans*, for refusing to receive him. Christ was highly offended at the Motion, tho' he knew very well, 'twas not deliberately made, but in a sudden fit of Passion, and that kindled too by the quick Resentment they had of a great Affront that was put upon their Master's Person. Now, if that Motion only of the Disciples, to call for Fire from Heaven to destroy the *Samaritans* for refusing to receive him, so highly offended Christ, how greatly incens'd must he needs be, to see Christians cutting the Throats of one another in cool Blood, and with a great deal of Deliberation, destroy and kill their Brethren, and that not for so aggravating a Fault, as renouncing their Religion, but for not being Christians of their Religion, or way of Worship? 'Tis lawful to confute a false Religion, and by all fair ways to convince Gain-sayers, but to blow a *Jew*, a *Turk*, or a *Heathen* up into the Air with Gun-powder, because they had the Misfortune to be so Born, and so Educated, is unwarrantable,

rantable, and what the Christian Religion allows not of. There is not any thing better known throughout the Christian World, than the most barbarous and savage Cruelties of the *Romish Church* towards *Protestants*, for renouncing Communion with her in her *Superstition* and gross Corruptions. But be not ye like unto them. Be not so much *Papists*, as to prosecute with Fire and Faggot all such as are not of your Communion. They know not of what Spirit they are, when they make no Conscience of burning Men for Religion, as they did our Ancestors in the Reign of *Queen Mary*. To go about to plant Religion by Barbarity and Inhumanity, and to think to save their own Souls by Butchering of other Mens Bodies, is the Doctrine of the Church of *Rome*, but such as Christ and his Apostles never taught. The Religion that comes from Heaven, is made up of Purity and Peace. She consecrates no Daggers to stab any Man of what Perswasion soever he be. No Quarrel in Religion allows any Man to fall upon another with Fire and Faggot. The Christian Religion is a Witness against all such fierce and furious Zeal, and curbs and restrains that cruel destructive Spirit, which is for dispatching Men out of the World, upon pretence, one Man is not of another's Religion. *Michael* the Arch-Angel, when he contended with the Devil, in the heat of Dispute, did not bring a railing Accusation against him.

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Thus having dispatch'd the third Particular, viz. That ye ought not to go out of the Road of your Duty, do as the wicked do, and join with them to commit Wickedness, because ye see them prosper: I come,

IV. To shew, That the flourishing Condition of the wicked is but short-liv'd, and therefore not to be envied.

The Prosperity of the wicked is but a seeming Prosperity, and hath no firmer Foundation than a Dream which vanisheth in an instant. God sets them in slippery places, they shall soon be cut down like the Grass, and fade away as the green Herb. The prosperous wicked Man does not stand so firm as he thinks. *David* tells us, there wanted not publick Examples of the sudden and terrible overthrow of such Men in his Days. *Psal.* 37. 36. *I myself have seen the wicked man in great power, and thriving in his Wickedness, yet as firm as he seem'd to stand, he was gone on a sudden. I sought him but he could not be found, I look'd about me to see what was become of him, but he was vanish'd on a sudden, and brought to nothing. And this God doth sometimes by turning their Counsels into Foolishness as he did that of Achitophel. Sometimes by taking off the Principal Person concern'd in wicked execrable Practices, as in the Case of Absalom: And sometimes by making the hidden things of Darkness be brought to Light, as in the Case of the Powder-Plot. A Con-*
trivance

trivance so horrid, and an Attempt so hellish, that if the Records of all Ages were strictly search'd, the like cou'd not be found. We have all Reason in the World to take up the Words of *David*, and say with him, *Psal. 111. v. 4. The Merciful and Gracious Lord hath so done his Marvellous Works, that they ought to be kept in Everlasting remembrance. The Discovery of the Plot was of the Lords doing, and it ought to be Marvellous in our Eyes. This is the Day which the Lord hath made, let us rejoice and be glad in it. And great Reason have we to Rejoice this Day upon a double Account :*

1. In Remembrance of the disappointment of the horrid Conspiracy, Plotted and design'd to have been Acted as upon this Day by the *Popish* Party ; and

2. In Remembrance of his late Majesty *K. William* the Third of glorious Memory his Landing, who as at this time came to Rescue us from the hands of the same restless Enemies, who had proceeded to that height of *Popery*, as to make open Profession of their Religion, to trample upon the Laws, and boldly defie the Government, as it was fundamentally Establish'd both in *Church* and *State*.

As for the Mischievous Designs and wicked Attempts of ill Men, God has by Strange and Wonderful ways made them Manifest. He has frequently blasted and defeated their Irreligious and Bloody Projects, and deny'd them the opportunity of Acting their intended mischief. And tho' they seem'd to flourish in their

their Wickedness and to be very Prosperous in the Management of their Affairs, yet in the Conclusion they were cut off, and Rooted out by some signal Vengeance or other. He that sat in Heaven had an Eye all the while upon them, and laugh'd them to Scorn, and having suffer'd them to grow Ripe for Destruction, brought it suddenly upon them.

Indeed it is but necessary, that God shou'd convince Proud and Insolent *Tyrants*, by a sudden Destruction, how much they were mistaken in their Notions of him and his Providence, and assert his own Honour, by making them as Notorious for their Punishments, as they had been Infamous for their Crimes. God many times suffers many *Tyrants* to rise high, that their fall may be the greater. Examples hereof we have in Holy Scripture, *Sennacherib*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Herod*, and *Others*, whom the Divine Vengeance seiz'd on a sudden, and put a terrible End to their greatness, when they least expected it. And who knows but God has a *Controversie* with that *Tyrannical* Prince the *French King*, who to promote an *Exorbitant Power*, and gratifie his *boundless Ambition*, has Waded through a *Sea of Blood*, and shut his Ears, to the lamentable Cries of many *Widows* and *Fatherless Children*, as if with the *Devil* he delighted and took pleasure in the Destruction of Mankind.

Some have been so vain as to ascribe their Prosperity to their own Policies, and conclude their Success was the sole Product of their own Strength and Wisdom.

dom. Others have thought God such a one as themselves, that their Prosperity was an Approbation of their Wickedness, that the Respite of Judgment was the Remission of their Guilt, and because the Divine Sentence is not executed, but they suffer'd to live in all earthly Splendor, therefore they are acquitted, and their Hearts thereupon fully set in them to do Evil. Thus those Scoffers mention'd by St. Peter, 2 Pet. 3. thought the evil Day was far from them, so far, as that it should never overtake them, and since all things continued as they were, they scornfully ask, ver. 4. *Where is God's promise of his coming to judgment?*

But to acquit God, the Prophet David plainly professeth that those, and such Men, however they may flatter themselves with vain hopes of continuing in their Station, yet God doth set them in slippery places, and he sets them there, as it were on purpose, that they may fall as in a moment, *Surely thou, O God, wilt cast them down into destruction.*

Thus having consider'd, That the flourishing Condition of the wicked is but short liv'd, and therefore not to be envied: I come,

Lastly. To speak of the assured Reward, if ye have patience a while, and meekly submit to the Will of God in his providential Administrations.

Eccles. 8. 12, 13. *Tho' a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, but it shall not be well*

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well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days which are as a shadow, because he feareth not before God. Psal. 31. 19. O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee, which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men. Psal. 58. 11. Verily there is a reward for the righteous. Heb. 6. 10. God is not unrighteous to forget any man's well doing. 1 Cor. 15. 58. Nor was ever any man's labour in vain in the Lord. St. Paul speaking of the excellent Goodness which was treasur'd up for all good and faithful Men, saith, That the natural Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, nor hath it entred into the Heart of Man to conceive the things which God hath prepar'd for them that love him. Tho' some good and godly Persons meet sometimes with Discouragements in this World, insomuch, that they seem to labour all in vain, and spend their Strength for nought, Isai. 49. 4. Yet surely their judgment is with the Lord. Was not St. Stephen highly rewarded for his Constancy and Perseverance in the Faith? Had not he an eternal Life bestow'd upon him for losing his Temporal one in his Master's Service? Has he not been ever since invested with a Crown of Martyrdom, a Crown of Glory? And did not the very Heavens open to receive his Spirit, when his Enemies by a charge of Stones forc'd it from his Body? Had not that Holy Man Job, for his Uprightness and Integrity, no better Wages than a Dunghil? Had he no Reward for his Patience under all his Afflictions, but a Potsherd? Had he no Remuneration for the loss of his Substance, Sheep, Oxen,

Oxen, Camels and Asses? Yes, it pleased the Lord to give him twice as much as he had before. Tho' he was long in Misery, yet the latter End of his Life was Rich and Splendid, for God shew'd Favour unto him. Had our Blessed Saviour no other Reward for all his Obedience, and all the Good he did, but a Crown of Thorns? Had he no Titles conferr'd upon him for all his Sufferings, but those of a *Friend of Publicans and Sinners*, a *Seducer*, a *Glutton*, a *Wine-Bibber*, a *Blasphemer*, a *Caster out of Devils by Beelzebub*, and the *Prince of Devils*? Had he no Reward conferr'd upon him for his being betray'd, bound, scourg'd, scoff'd at, revil'd, mock'd and spit on? Had our Blessed Saviour no Reward for his ignominious Death and painful Crucifixion? Yes, He is now a Glorious Conqueror, and being enter'd into the Heavens, sits at the Right Hand of God, all Power both in Heaven and Earth being committed to him. His Throne shall be for ever and ever. God has set him at his own Right Hand, far above all Principalities and Powers, and every Name that is named, both in this World, and also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his Feet. Was there no Reward bestow'd upon St. Paul, for his fighting his good Fight, finishing his Course and keeping the Faith, but a Roman Axe sharpen'd with Nero's Cruelty? Yes, There was laid up for him a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the Righteous Judge will give unto him at that Day of the general Judgment; when the Lord Jesus would come in Glorious Majesty to judge the World. There is a Reward laid up

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in Heaven for all God's faithful Servants. God will abundantly recompence every one that performs his Will, and whatever Trials or Sufferings they meet with in this World, 'tis but Expecting awhile, and our Lord will come, and his Reward is with him. *Be not weary in well doing, for in due season ye shall reap, if ye faint not.*

Let none of you then envy Sinners, as to be irritated by their thriving Wickedness, and success in their evil Ways, to do as they do, and imitate them in their irreligious and unwarrantable Projects, but stick close to the Principles of Piety and Vertue, trusting in God, and committing yourselves to him. God's Ways are past finding out, and therefore, if a Man would live Happily, the Wise Man adviseth him not to grow fullen, much less to doubt of God's good Providence, tho' ye are not able to give a Reason why vertuous Men suffer much, when the wicked at the same time Prosper and Flourish. Solomon tells us, he travell'd as much as ever Man did in this Disquisition, Why things here in this World are administred with such Inequality? And this was all the Satisfaction at which he could arrive, That the Providence of God doth certainly govern every thing here below, but why he suffers the wicked to prosper, and the good Man to be oppressed, in this he was still forc'd to confess his Ignorance, and concluded it impossible to give a full Account of it. Tho' we do not see the Reason, the End, and the Use of God's Dispensations, yet we ought

ought with an implicit Submission, to resign our selves up to his Disposal, and rest assured, it shall be best for us, tho' we cannot understand what it means. Your Duty is to submit to the Hand of God in all his Visitations. He strikes not at random. The Stroaks we receive, are manag'd by the Conduct of that Supreme Being, who does all things by an infinite Wisdom. 'Tis his Providence that directs them, and measures out the kind, weight, and continuance of them, and therefore, not our Will, O Lord, but thine be done: Put your Mouth in the Dust, and acknowledge yourselves to be but poor Dust and Ashes, and unworthy to Dispute the Divine Dispensations and Providences. Be not troubled at the Prosperity of wicked Men and their strange Successfulness, but *be ye in the fear of the Lord all the Day long, and then your Expectation shall not be cut off.*

To Conclude: If you would strengthen that which God has already wrought for you, and perfect his marvellous Works, ye must so live, that God may bless you with the continuance of his Blessings, and have no occasion given him to repent of the Deliverances he has already wrought for us. Whilst ye are under so gracious an Influence of Heaven, ye must take care that ye do not by your Sins, make such a *Separation* between God and you, as may provoke him to throw off his Care, and withdraw his helping Hand from you. *The Eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him.*

An Heathen Poet made this Observation to the Romans, That their Success was owing to their Piety, and *their Obedience to the Gods, made them Rulers and Commanders.* What's to be done then to procure a Continuance of those great Things God has already done for us? Even this, to come to Repentance, and that is the way to carry them on to Perfection. We are an happy People if we did but know it. We are not involv'd in Blood and Confusion as other Countries are. We sleep quietly in our Beds, whilst the People of other Nations are robb'd, plunder'd and burnt out of their Dwellings. We sit safe under our Vine, and under our Fig-tree, whilst others are forc'd to fly for their Lives, and leave all to the Rage and Fury of implacable Adversaries. We build and plant, beautifie and adorn our Houses and Habitations, whilst those in other Countries are burnt down, batter'd about their Ears, and lie in Ruin and Desolation. We Sow in Peace and Reap in Peace, whilst the Fruits of other Mens Labours are enjoy'd by Strangers and Enemies. Such Blessings cry aloud to us to be thankful, to praise the Lord for his Goodness, and declare the Wonders he hath done for us. O let his Mercy and Goodness lead you all to Repentance! May his wonderful Deliverances oblige you all to love and fear him! And may his great and manifold Preservations endear your Righteousness, and excite your Care to Holiness and Purity of Life, and then the Deliverances you have had, will be a Pledge of more. He that has been the
God

God of our Mercies, will be the God of our Strength, if we will but answer the End of his Mercies, be thankful for them, and shew forth our Thankfulness in an Holy Life and Conversation. Would we but do our Parts as God has done his, what a flourishing *Church* and *People* might we be? God will not be always at the Expence of Miracles for our Preservation. If we neglect him in the Day of his Mercy, What can we expect but he should leave us in the Day of our Calamity, and let some worse thing befall us than *Popery*, which made such *Slaves* and *Vassals* of our Forefathers? The Blood of those Religious *Martyrs*, *Cranmer*, *Ridley*, *Latimer*, *Hooper* and others, calls loudly upon us, to be Zealous for the preserving that Religion they died for: Those good Men died in opposition to *Popery*: Fire and Faggot, and the most exquisite tormenting Methods which *Popish* Cruelty could invent, did not in the least daunt, discompose, or make them draw back in the Day of their *fiery Trial*. They laid down their Lives, not only because they themselves would not be Partakers of *Rome's* Sins, but also that the Ages to come might detest and abhor a Religion, which maintains Blasphemy of Worship, Absurdities of Doctrines, and bloody and inhumane Practices. Should ever *Popery* get the upper Hand among us, it would be a dismal Day, and the blackest our Eyes ever beheld. We do at this Day (God be thanked) enjoy our Religion in its Purity and Perfection. We live under an happy Government. We have

have the Advantages of a fruitful Soil, which plentifully affords all things necessary and convenient for Food and Raiment. We are blessed with a temperate Air, neither scorch'd on the one hand, nor frozen on the other, but enjoy a seasonable and moderate Revolution of Heat and Cold: And therefore if you have any Zeal for your Religion, any Desire to be govern'd according to Law, any Love for your Country, or any Kindness for either your Souls or Bodies, if any of these will work upon you to quicken your Zeal, let it appear in your Practice, shew it in your Lives and Conversations, and be ready to bless God that your Lot is falln in a fair Ground. Away then with all Coldness and Indifference in such a weighty Matter, where our Religion, our Country, our Liberties and Properties, are all so deeply concern'd. For tho' God has wrought wonderful Deliverances for us, yet if we continue an unthankful People, seem indifferent under the Multitude of his Mercies, and with the ungateful *Israelites*, are in love with the Flesh-pots of *Egypt*, and would return back into that Land, God may be provok'd at last to consume us, to throw us off, and trouble himself no longer with us. We must clap our Hands before our Eyes and resolve not to see, if we do not firmly believe that the *French King's* Designs are to extirpate our Holy Religion, to trump *Popery* upon us, and bring our Necks under the Yoke of an *Arbitrary* and *Tyrannical Power*. And the better to carry them on, has in contempt of Her Majesty's
Rightful

Rightful and Lawful Title to the Crown, and in contempt to the whole Nation, set up, and proclaim'd an Impostor to be our King, one that is educated in the Popish Religion, and an Enemy to the English Constitution.

The God of Mercy be merciful to this Land of ours. O Lord continue thy Care towards us, secure to us and our Posterity our Holy Religion, and never let that Man of Blood, the French King, triumph in our Ruin and Destruction. O Lord, hear, O Lord, hearken and do; and this we beg for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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